

This Week in Congress

June 1, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." This week's headlines are:

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A Tribute to America's Fallen Heroes on Memorial Day

Yesterday, Kansans across our state observed Memorial Day, a day set aside to honor the men and women who put their lives at risk for the good of their country. It is remarkable that from the Revolutionary War to today, we have been blessed with men and women willing to sacrifice God's gift of life for the greater good. On this important day, we express our gratitude for those who risked everything so their children and grandchildren could live in freedom. [Click here](#) to watch a special Memorial Day tribute.

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Joining Peabody Residents in Memorial Day Parade

On Saturday, I joined Peabody-area residents for their Word War II festival and Memorial Day parade. I was especially honored to have my good friend Norman Staab with me for this special occasion. Norman served our country in the U.S. Army as a Corporal and was the 1986-1987 National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Thanks to John Donovan for driving the Army Jeep that we rode in during the parade and to Shane Marler for inviting me to participate.

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Visiting with Little River Residents

Also on Saturday, I visited with Little River residents during a community lunch at the local fire station. This event was part of a Memorial Day celebration to remember those who have sacrificed for our freedoms today. Thanks to Mutual Telephone Company, Raleigh Insurance and Garden of Eden for sponsoring the lunch. I also enjoyed visiting the impressive local grocery store and the beautiful art display at the Burke Hotel. Thanks again to the Little River

residents for their warm Kansas hospitality.

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Honoring Kansans at Mount Hope Cemetery in Topeka

On Monday, I joined Topeka veterans and community members at Mount Hope Cemetery for a Memorial Day ceremony. The event honored Kansas men and women who answered the call to serve our country and made the ultimate sacrifice. I spoke to those gathered about honoring their sacrifice by working together to better our world. The true strength of our nation lies within its citizens. When each citizen does his or her part for America, our nation will prosper and be secure. Thanks to Jannett Wiens for organizing this event and for inviting me to participate.

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Thanking Veterans at VA Medical Center in Topeka

Since 1946, Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center in Topeka has cared for thousands of Kansas veterans. On Memorial Day, I enjoyed visiting with of these many veterans and their families at the hospital. I also visited with the residents at the Community Living Center and thanked the staff for caring for the men and women who served our country. Thanks to Jim Gleisberg for arranging my visit and thanks to new Director Judy McKee for her kind hospitality during my visit.

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Federal Government Must Secure the Border

Despite all of the misinformation and criticism about the new immigration law in Arizona, a majority of Americans support it. Folks understand that the federal government has failed when it comes to immigration. We are a country of laws and they must be enforced. Arizona is stepping forward to do the job the federal government has not done. This week, I spoke to the House of Representatives about my support for Arizona's effort to enforce our laws. The federal government must enforce our laws and secure the border. [Click here](#) to watch my comments to the House.

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Washington's Spending Spree Must Stop

This spring, thousands of Kansas graduates will join the workforce seeking economic prosperity and opportunities similar to those their parents have enjoyed. Yet, they are leaving college at a challenging time. Today's graduates face a tough job market with one in ten Americans unemployed and one in five underemployed. Graduates who are fortunate enough to find a job

will soon begin paying taxes, many for the first time. Unfortunately, taxes will consume an even greater portion of their take-home pay if government spending is not controlled. In 2009, the federal government spent \$1.67 for every dollar it collected, and borrowed 43 cents for every dollar it spent. This out-of-control spending and borrowing jeopardizes the prosperity of future generations who will have to pay these debts. In 1988, the year most 2010 college graduates were born, our national debt stood at \$2.6 trillion. This week, our nation's debt reached a record high of \$13 trillion – which constitutes a fivefold increase just in their short lifetime.

To ensure graduates today have the same opportunities as previous generations, the Washington spending spree must stop. Rather than continue to spend money we do not have, Congress needs to take three steps: adhere to a balanced budget, reduce government spending, and pursue a strategy of job creation to get our economy back on track. As a parent and a member of Congress, I will continue to work for common-sense solutions to our country's economic problems so our graduates can enjoy a brighter, more hopeful future.

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Shielding Dairy Producers from Costly EPA Regulation

This week, I joined Rep. Candice Miller and seven other members of Congress in introducing H.R. 5426, legislation to exempt milk and other dairy products from the Oil Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) program. Under a new EPA rule, above ground milk storage tanks larger than 1,320 gallons would be subject to unnecessary and costly containment measures. The intent of the SPCC program is to prevent petroleum—not milk—from entering the navigable waters of the U.S. Not only does this regulation simply lack commonsense, but it would cause an already stressed dairy industry to incur significant compliance fees. As written under the Bush Administration, this rule included an exemption for dairy products. However, when the Obama Administration took control of the EPA, the pending rule was withdrawn and rewritten without the dairy exemption. This is just one of many regulations from this EPA that will increase costs on agricultural producers and consumers and endanger jobs in rural America.

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In the Office

John Macaulay of Arkansas City was in with GE Engine Services—Strother to discuss funding for F-35 Joint Strike Fighter engines. Alfred Botchway of Stillwell, Joni Cobb and Jay Kim of Lenexa and Gary Mason of Wichita were in with Kansas PIPELINE to inform me about PIPELINE's efforts to promote and encourage new entrepreneurs in Kansas. Jim Tiede of Salina was in with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen to discuss adjustments to hours of service in the Rail Safety Improvement Act and to talk about quality of life issues involved with the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Todd Bjornstad of Phillipsburg was in with Kyle Railroad to update me on short line rail issues. Jason Lanning, Cindy Bodine, Melissa Chavez and Bryan Neal of Olathe; and Connie Presley of Wichita were in with the National Air Traffic Controller Association to express their support for legislation to modernize the Federal Aviation Administration. Mayor Joe Reardon of Kansas City was in with the Unified Government of Wyandotte County to update me on priorities for the community. Andy Allison and Barb Langner of Topeka were in with the Kansas Health Policy Authority to discuss implementation of the new health care bill and how it will affect Kansans.

Mike Crow and Bob Totten of Topeka, Kip Spray of Newton, Nick Totten of Lawrence, Leif Yoerstad of Kansas City and Brian Hansen of Towanda were in with the Kansas Contractors Association to discuss their support for a new highway bill. Michael and Margery Haas of Hoxie and Ed McKechnie of Pittsburg also stopped by the office to visit.

Several Kansans were in this week for a tour of the U.S. Capitol building, including Stacia Taylor of Prairie Village, Nancy Heller of Abilene, Vicky Chamberlain of Lakin and Daniel Chamberlain of Garden City. In from Salina were Bill, Marsha, Marci, Paige and Kylie Mauch; Lindsey Markle; Ron, Lisa, Cody, Clint and Casey Frank; and Chuck, Jennifer, Chelsey and Bailey Underwood. In from Hutchinson were Jennifer Zolman; Kevin, Chrstina and Kyle Long; Marion and Brenda Miller; and Toni Gonzalez and Larry Buller. Also in for a tour were John Elcock, Sierra Snyder and Travis Siehndel of Topeka; and Amy Werth and Kevin Threlkel of Hays. In from Chapman were Joan Taylor and Allison and Michaela Wederski. In from Wichita were Robert, Gina, Richard and Victoria Lee; Pete Chamberlain; and Dallas, Waltraud, Yannick and Alexander Ford.

Contact Me

It is an honor to serve you in Washington, D.C. Please let me know how I can be of assistance. To send me an email, [click here](#). You can also [click here](#) to contact me through one of my Kansas offices or my Washington, D.C., office.

Very truly yours,

Jerry

